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Book Reviews.

Regnum Dei. Eight Lectures on the Kingdom of God in the History of Christian Thought. By ARCHIBALD ROBERTSON, D.D., Principal of King's College, London. New York : The Macmillan Co., 1901. Pp. xx + 401. \$2.50.

This volume contains the Bampton Lectures for 1901. Dr. Robertson characterizes the treatise as "the result of the writer's reflection with a view to his own guidance in life." It goes without saying that the subject is of the most vital importance to every Christian in his practical, experiential life; and Dr. Robertson rightly premises his investigation with the proposition that the kingdom of God is the Christian answer to the most vital question that man has to solve, the question of the purpose of his being. Where is his answer to be found? Every Christian will look to Jesus for it, and Dr. Robertson takes his starting-point from Jesus. But the teaching of Jesus was based upon hopes and convictions in full currency at the time of his advent on earth. His conception of the kingdom is a many-sided one, and the task of developing what is implicit in it, and of illustrating the harmony of its various parts and aspects, had to be undertaken and performed by the long succession of his followers through the Christian centuries. Accordingly, in presenting his subject, Dr. Robertson, after a rapid survey of the theocratic ideals presented in the Old Testament, and current, more or less modified, at the time of Jesus, proceeds in the second and third lectures to treat of the kingdom of God as preached by Jesus and the apostles. In the fourth he deals with the chiliastic misconceptions of the primitive church, which were molded in part by literalistic interpretations of the Apocalypse and in part by other causes. The fifth lecture takes up the epoch-making idea of Augustine regarding the kingdom as the invisible church. Augustine's idea, however, includes the beginnings of two lines of development which are next considered in the sixth and seventh lectures. The former of these deals with the conception of the mediæval papacy, viz., that of the kingdom of God as an omnipotent church; the latter describes the intellectual and moral breaking up of the system, and prepares the way for the consideration of the other line of development from Augustine, that of the kingdom

as the spiritual body of Jesus Christ. In the eighth lecture the results of the investigation are brought together and correlated with the problems which confront the Christian in modern life.

The avowed purpose of the author is not to build an argument for a predetermined conclusion, but, as already indicated, to institute an inquiry on a subject of transcendent importance. Accordingly, the questions that naturally occur in estimating the work are: Does the author steadfastly keep this one aim before him? Does he give each of his sources its due proportion of attention? and, finally, Does he use the best methods in the prosecution of his investigation? The first and third of these questions we may answer in the main affirmatively; the second we can only answer in the negative, or, at best, with a very qualified affirmative. It seems to us that the space and attention given to the biblical conception of the kingdom of God is not proportionate to the real importance of that part of Dr. Robertson's sources as compared with the space and attention given to the ecclesiastical development of the idea.

Within the treatment of the biblical conception, we further consider it a defect to place the Pauline concept before that given in the synoptic gospels. This arrangement is chronological, to be sure, but not historical. The Pauline concept is the unfolding of that given in the synoptic gospels. The teaching of Jesus in the synoptic gospels, we take it, is a correctly reported account of an earlier stage in history than the teaching of Paul in his epistles, although chronologically the epistles may have been written earlier than the gospel.

In his exposition of modern views, Dr. Robertson seems to ignore altogether the work of the most recent—especially American—writers on the subject of the kingdom of God. The theory of the kingdom that identifies it with regenerated humanity in its entire breadth and depth seems to have no place in Dr. Robertson's discussion.

All these points may possibly be regarded as matters of opinion on which different individuals will agree to differ. On the other hand, it must be noted that the work of Dr. Robertson is a model of scholarly, devout study, characterized by that love of historical research which is distinctive of the English churchman since the days of Pusey and Newman. Principal Robertson cannot be classified with the eminent men just named as an Anglo-Catholic, but he has not failed to imbibe what there was of spiritual-mindedness and reverence for the ancient church in their thought and work.

A. C. ZENOS.